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DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE REINDEER ONCE MORE

THERE is as yet no exhaustive or real history of any animal domestication or plant cultivation, and such a task will still be impossible for a long time to come. Naturalists, biologists, geographers, historians, ethnographers, and orientalist, have made numerous contributions to these subjects, every one from the particular angle of his field; and, as is well known, their results are widely divergent and cannot yet be harmonized. Whoever has had occasion to work on these problems feels only too well that he is merely able to make a contribution to a problem, and makes no pretense of solving the problem in its entire complexity. Dr. G. Hatt has recently published an article on Reindeer Nomadism (*Memoirs, American Anthropological Association*, vol. VI, no. 2), which is partially devoted to a criticism of my former contribution to these Memoirs on the same subject. Dr. Hatt's paper doubtless contains many interesting references and notes, especially as far as his own field, the Lapp, is concerned; but I find it necessary to point out a number of misunderstandings and to discuss briefly some of his conclusions which are unacceptable to me.

Dr. Hatt claims that my disregard of the biology of the reindeer "seriously impairs the value of my theories about the origin of reindeer-domestication." This criticism is hardly fair, for I have not given any theories in regard to such origins, nor do I believe that in general origins can be explained satisfactorily. I hold that facts mean everything and that theories are of no account, and have plainly enough indicated (p. 129 of my article) that we are ignorant of how the initial domestication of the reindeer was brought into effect. I have then arrayed a number of available data which might give us a clew as to how this process came about, leaving it to whoever so desired to reconstruct this process according to his own liking. I did not attempt "to trace the evolutionary history of reindeer nomadism," as Dr. Hatt wishes me to do; for like Boas, Lowie, and others, I have always opposed the evolutionary method in its application to anthropological problems (cf. this journal, 1917, p. 299, with reference to Dr. Hatt's theory of the evolution of moccasins).

The essential points discussed by Hatt are all contained in my notice

of the reindeer. It seems to me that the points made in this paper, regarding the relative age of the cultural elements of reindeer nomadism, can hardly be maintained. The criteria made out for earlier and later phenomena are purely subjective and a matter of debatable opinion. The vagueness of his chronology is not helpful in historical investigation. History must be based on historical data and documentary evidence, not on speculation. The account of Rubruck of the thirteenth century, Dr. Hatt quotes as proving the early use of ox or horse carts by the nomads, is of little value in view of the ancient accounts of the carts used by the nomadic Scythians in Hippocrates (*cf.* Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, p. 50) and by the Turkish tribes in the Chinese Annals many centuries before that time. I fully maintain my point that the domestication of the reindeer presents a secondary and imitative process leaning toward horse and cattle, and as regards driving, toward the dog. Hatt denies the former influence, but then he hastens to explain that "reindeer milking certainly must be due to influence from cow or horse culture," and again, "the use of the reindeer for riding and carrying and as a milk-giving animal must have come into the Tungusian-Soyotian area as a result of contact with horse and cow culture;" and finally, "it is not to be denied that some reindeer nomads have taken over certain things from horse and cattle breeding."

I do not see that the data relating to the milking of reindeer which Dr. Hatt quotes alter the views expressed by me. Pekarski states plainly in regard to the Tungus of Ayan that butter is made to a small extent only, and this isolated case of modern origin is an exception which confirms the rule that butter was formerly not made by the Tungus in general. The fact that the Soyot consume reindeer milk in the shape of butter or cheese was stated by myself (p. 127). The chapter "Beginning of Reindeer Nomadism" is based on unproved premises and hypothetical and arbitrary speculations. Olsen (p. 113), according to Hatt, is wrong in his observations among the Soyot and must have misunderstood what he saw, because it so happens that his data contradict a theory of Hatt. This procedure seems to me entirely inadmissible, because it is based on the desire of the speculative theorist who combats the facts which disturb or shatter his dreams.

I strictly maintain my interpretation of Ohthere's account. Nowhere have I entertained any doubt as to the nationality of the Finn, as Hatt supposes. His two objections to my interpretation (p. 120) are not valid. How do we know that a Norseman in the ninth century would never think of keeping deer in a park? The supposition that "the reindeer is a

migratory animal which cannot be kept in parks or enclosures" is unproved. For at least twelve years I have observed a couple of reindeer in a zoological garden, and they were perfectly happy and content there. The reindeer of the Soyot is not at all migratory, but during the summer the herds constantly remain in the forest in the proximity of human habitations (after Olsen, in my article, p. 127). When in the summer of 1898 I resided in the settlement Wal among the Ewunki Tungus on the northeast coast of Saghalin island, the reindeer herds of this tribe were kept in confinement on a small isle hardly two miles square, which they were unable to leave; they were held there in a perfect enclosure formed by water. Any park or enclosure may certainly be large enough to allow an animal to yield to its migratory habit. Giles Fletcher (*Of the Russe Common Wealth*, London, 1591, ed. of E. A. Bond, 1856, p. 101), in his description of the life of the Lapp, states, "Their travaile to and fro is upon sleds, drawn by the Olen deer; which they use to turne a grasing all the sommer time in an iland called Kilden (of a very good soile compared with other partes of that countrie), and towards the winter time, when the snow beginneth to fall, they fetch them home again for the use of their sledde."

We do not read more from or into our documents than is warranted by their contents, and Ohthere does not say a word about the Lapp tending his herds. There is as yet no proof for the allegation that the Lapp of the ninth century were reindeer nomads. Frijs says advisedly, "The Lapp in the north of Scandinavia during the ninth century were still fishermen and hunters, and were only acquainted with reindeer as game, while they did not yet possess tame animals" (C. Keller, *Naturgeschichte der Haustiere*, p. 200). Dr. Hatt objects to this statement that our forefathers "were not ethnographers"; but this is no argument. The interpretation of reindeer into the harts put to the cart of Hotherus (p. 125) is not safe: the tale of Saxo is legendary, not historical. Also the Romans and Chinese harnessed stags to carriages (see my article, pp. 132, 133), and no one would think of claiming that these were tamed reindeer. In the opinion of the best philologists of our time, particularly those of France, no historical facts should be deduced from the status of loan-words and other linguistic phenomena (against Hatt, p. 128); if this is done, however, the conclusion will always remain an hypothesis, but will never rise into a fact. That Hatt, after offering not a single piece of tangible evidence, should advance the assertion, "That reindeer nomadism existed in Scandinavia in the ninth century, and even somewhat earlier, may accordingly be regarded not as a mere hypothesis,

but as a solid fact," is beyond my comprehension. I apprehend that a deep gulf separates us as to what constitutes a solid fact. There is not even room here for an hypothesis.

Dr. Hatt's discussion of the Kalewala is based more on an attempt to sustain his theory than on objective evidence. I had occasion myself to read this work repeatedly and at different times, and considerable literature about it. The book of Comparetti on which I chiefly relied is justly regarded as a classic throughout the civilized world, and it may be expected that a man who devoted a lifelong and serious study to this vast and complex subject knows at least as much about it as Hatt. Naturally there is much controversial matter and divergence of opinion with respect to the Kalewala, in the same manner as in the case of the Homeric poems, the Rigveda, or the Avesta. Dr. Hatt passes off his own ideas as "the truth about Kalewala" (p. 127) and denies categorically that it represents a true and perfect picture of the Finn prior to their christianization. May it not be that his judgment is influenced by the fact that the Kalewala runs counter to his theories, for it does not contain the faintest allusion to domesticated reindeer, while the wild reindeer was an object of the hunt, while sledge-driving is most frequently mentioned, but the sledges are always drawn by horses (my article, p. 191).¹

Little troubled Lemminkäinen,
And he spoke the words which follow:
"Make a snowshoe left to run with,
And a right one to put forward!
I must chase the elk on snowshoes,
In the distant field of Hiisi."

XIII, 59-64.

"Let the men who live in Lapland,
Help me all to bring the elk home;
And let all the Lapland women
Set to work to wash the kettles;
And let all the Lapland children
Hasten forth to gather splinters;
And let all the Lapland kettles
Help to cook the elk when captured." etc.
But the third time he rushed onward,
Then he reached the elk of Hiisi.
Then he took a pole of maple,
And he made a birchen collar;
Hiisi's elk he tethered with it,

¹ I select several passages (translation of W. F. Kirby) in support of my above statement. If all this is not realism of cultural conditions, the Kalewala assuredly is pretty well consistent in its madness.

In a pen of oak he placed it.
 "Stand thou there, O elk of Hiisi,
 Here remain, O nimble reindeer!"

XIII, 203-210, 217-224.

Glide throughout the land of Hiisi,
 And across the heaths of Pohja,
 There to chase the elk of Hiisi,
 And to catch the nimble reindeer.

XIV, 19-22.

Thereupon the colt he harnessed,
 In the front she yoked the bay one,
 And she placed old Väinämöinen
 In the sledge behind the stallion.

VII, 349-352.

Väinämöinen, old and steadfast,
 Took his horse of chestnut color,
 And between the shafts he yoked him,
 Yoked before the sledge the chestnut,
 On the sledge himself he mounted,
 And upon the seat he sat him.

X, 1-6.

Thus the smith, e'en Ilmarinen,
 Clothed himself, and made him ready,
 Robed himself, and made him handsome,
 And his servant he commanded:
 "Yoke me now a rapid courser,
 In the sledge adorned so finely,
 That I start upon my journey,
 And to Pohjola may travel."
 Thereupon the servant answered,
 "Horses six are in the stable,
 Horses six, on oats that fatten;
 Which among them shall I yoke you?"

XVIII, 379-390.

I cannot see what gives us the right to say that "To regard the descriptions of Lapland and the Lapp, contained in Kalewala, as realism, would be perfectly ridiculous (p. 127)." Had it so happened that the Kalewala furnishes the opposite data which would support Hatt's presumptions, he would probably have accepted them without hesitation.

While I have to disagree with Dr. Hatt on many points, and am compelled to reject his claims, there is one point, however, on which I am heartily in accord with him, and this is his plea for collecting more mate-

rial, before we shall know all about reindeer nomadism. What we need are facts and research based on serious information. We live to learn and to work.

Finally I may be allowed to quote a passage from a letter of the late Dr. Herman K. Haeberlin, in memory of a friend who was always dear to me. On November 1, 1917, our regretted friend wrote me from Columbia University, New York, as follows: "I was very much interested in your paper on the reindeer. Aside from its value as the investigation of a concrete cultural trait, its methodology I think is highly instructive for us anthropologists. It shows what can be attained by a scholarly coöperation of direct historical reconstruction and indirect ethnological inference. Furthermore, an important methodological point is that you trace the origin of reindeer domestication to a definite geographical area rather than to a certain tribe. This methodological distinction ought to be borne in mind more clearly than we have thus far done. I shall attempt to make the same point when I discuss the center of distribution of imbricated basketry in North America."

B. LAUFER